

**MINUTES OF THE
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 8, 2002**

The Proficiency Testing Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Tuesday, January 8, 2002, at 1:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time (EST). The meeting was led by Chairperson Ms. Barbara Burmeister of the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene. A list of action items is given in Attachment A and the list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to address items of importance identified in the committee's previously distributed meeting agenda.*

INTRODUCTION

The teleconference was started by Ms. Burmeister doing the attendance roll call and reviewing the meeting agenda.

AGENDA ITEMS

Minutes and Action Items

The minutes of the November 20, 2001 teleconference were reviewed and approved as written with one minor word change. All Action Items were noted as complete.

Dr. Anand Mudambi will review the minutes from the NELAC-7i session and forward comments to Ms. Burmeister to finalize and distribute to the PT Committee for review and approval for posting on the NELAC website.

Revised Field of Proficiency Testing Tables

Radiochemistry Analytes

Ms. Burmeister noted that some updates to the field of proficiency tables (FOT) have been received. It was stated that ERA, a NIST-approved PT provider, is now accredited by NIST to provide PT for radiochemistry analytes. The acceptance criteria for radiochemistry analytes are found in the EPA Criteria Document. The FOT will be revised to include the radiochemistry analytes and Ms. Burmeister will distribute to the PT Committee for review at the January 22nd teleconference. After final approval, it was agreed by the Committee that the FOT should be sent to Ms. Jeanne Hankins for posting to the NELAC website.

PT Reporting Limits

A report from the PT Reporting Limits subcommittee was deferred until the February 12, 2002 teleconference. A comment received by Mr. Michael Dancziger from PSC Analytical Services regarding reporting limits for PT studies will be addressed by the subcommittee.

PTOB/PTPA Requirements

A2LA PT Provider Accreditation Program

Ms. Burmeister reported that the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA) PT Providers Accreditation Program has been rewritten to match NELAC Standards. She has a printed document and will try to obtain an electronic copy. She will distribute either the hard copy or the electronic copy to the PT committee for discussion at the January 22nd teleconference. It was noted that this issue will also be addressed by the NELAC Accrediting Authorities (NAA), formerly Accrediting Authorities Workgroup (AAWG). Ms. RaeAnn Haynes will ask for 'next steps' at the next NAA teleconference scheduled for January 15, 2002.

Problematic Analytes and Acceptance Criteria Update

Status of PT Study Data Received

The request for PT study data including the format of the data required was sent to the PT Providers. Ms. Burmeister noted that there have been no responses to date. She indicated that the PT Committee should move forward with whatever data may be received. Confidentiality of the data was discussed and it was determined that the data will be anonymous with PT providers coded as "A,B,C, etc." Ms. Burmeister reiterated that Mr. Thomas Coyner will crunch the data once the data has been received. It was suggested and agreed that once the recalculation of the regression equations has been completed but before making any acceptance criteria changes, that a summary be prepared and given to the NAAs to review and comment. It was also determined by this Committee that if a PT Provider submits data that they receive the final summary including data whether or not requested. This will assure that all interested PT Providers are kept current. The PT Providers have until January 18, 2002 to return data to Ms. Burmeister.

Preparation Methods

This topic has been deferred until Dr. Larry Jackson is in attendance.

Development of Technology Codes

Dr. John Griggs, Dr. Anand Mudambi and Dr. Tom McAninch will develop a list of technology codes. It was stated that Dr. Ken Jackson, Chair of the Program, Policy and Structure Committee has a list of technologies that can be used as a starting point. The PT Committee will only need to add codes. Tom will contact Mr. Jackson to request the list of technologies.

EPA/NIST Items

OGWDW Concerns re Limited Use of Quick Response PT Samples

In reviewing the draft of the OGWDW Lab Bulletin, it was noted that OGWDW has concerns regarding the limited use of quick response PT samples. A response to the draft article was prepared by the PT Committee and sent out in a formal letter to Mr. Ed Glick. A request was made for OGWDW to join the PT teleconference on January 22, 2002.

There was an extended discussion by the PT committee regarding the use of quick response PT samples including the rationale for the newly ratified language in Section 2.7.3. The committee is looking forward to resolving the issue with the OGWDW during the January 22nd teleconference.

NELAC-7i Comments Questions Received

PT Frequency Options - Carl Kircher "White Paper"

Due to the short time remaining, this topic was deferred until the next PT teleconference on January 22nd.

30-Day Requirement Between PT Studies

A comment was received by Mr. Tony Bright, Oklahoma DEQ regarding the reason for the 30-day requirement between PT studies if the initial test passes. Ms. Burmeister will respond to the comment and will also advise that the 30-day requirement was reduced to 15 days in the newly ratified 2001 Standard.

Definition of Six Months

A comment was received by Mr. Richard Sheibley, Pennsylvania DEP, regarding an interpretation of the PT study frequency of "approximately six months". The PT committee felt that the language should be changed to show a range of time instead of six months. They agreed that the language should be "not less than 150 days or more than 210 days." The committee will propose this change at the NELAC-8 Annual Conference. It was suggested that a FAQ be written to provide guidance now and to promote change to the Standard. Ms. Marykay Steinman will prepare the FAQ and forward to the committee. It was also recommended and agreed that this FAQ be presented at the next NELAC Accrediting Authorities meeting to keep them apprized.

Additions to Analyte and Method Codes

Chris Tilley from a New York accredited laboratory is attempting to match methods and analytes to the codes posted on the website. He contacted Matt Caruso of the NEW York ELAP for help. They have found possible discrepancies and missing codes. This needs further evaluation and has been assigned by Ms. Burmeister to a new subcommittee, Method & Analyte Codes. This subcommittee will be comprised of Dr. Ralph Obenauf, Dr. Anand Mudambi, and Dr. Michael Miller. Ms. Burmeister will forward the tables to Ralph for evaluation.

Membership and Outreach Committee Update

A new liaison is needed for the Membership and Outreach Committee. Committee members are asked to consider volunteering and submit their name to Barb.

Other Items or Issues

Ms. Burmeister reported that Dr. John Griggs has volunteered to draft any Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that the committee may require and annually review current SOPs.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Ms. Burmeister adjourned the meeting.

NEXT MEETING

The next PT committee teleconference is scheduled for January 22, 2002, at 1:00 p.m., EST.

**ACTION ITEMS
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 8, 2002**

Item No.	Action	Date to be Completed
1	Review/edit NELAC-7i session minutes and forward to Ms. Burmeister (Mudambi)	01/22/02
2	Add radiochemistry analytes to FOT (Burmeister)	01/22/02
2	PT Reporting Limit Subcommittee Report to PT Committee and response to Dancziger comment (Steinman)	02/12/02
3	Distribute A2LA info to PT Committee (Burmeister)	01/22/02
4	Develop Technology Codes (McAninch, Mudambi, Griggs)	02/12/02
5	Write FAQ for definition of “six months” (Steinman)	01/22/02
6	Respond to analyte and method code comment (Obenauf)	02/12/02

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PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 8, 2002**

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